Moon

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Moon

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Short Fic for #SpookySlick Fest 2020
~~Knotting~~ / Full Moon / ~~Monsters/Werewolves~~

An Agent, a Bounty Hunter, their quarry and a haunted space station.

Notes

Note on rating: I've rated as explicit for the opening scene, but that is the limit of the smut as the rest of the story is how they got to that point.

Halloween 2097

“Alpha,” Will grunted as Duncan slammed him against the bulkhead. The large viewing platform on the station’s central promenade was just one long window into space, and right now all they could see was the moon. The light almost blinding as it cast their writhing shadows against the grey metal of the station’s interior.

Will wasn’t in heat, being a beta it was impossible. And yet the way he felt raw and feral, and desperate he might as well be. He could only imagine this was what it felt like.

It was the moon, the fucking inescapable moon. It had to be.

Will’s mind was certain of that for just a moment before the alpha’s teeth sank into his neck and he was once more fading into the instincts of his body, latent as with all betas, until this alpha had chosen him as his mate. Until they'd chosen each other.

He growled and clung to Duncan as the Alpha lifted him against the wall and fucked up into his sweaty, open body. The friction no longer painful as it had been, so used to being used in this way now.

It was bliss.

“Mine,” Duncan growled.

And Will began to feel the slick welling inside him.

One Year Earlier

Will grit his teeth as he felt his ship’s clamps lock and seal, his airlock lining up perfectly with the space station.

He had never wanted to come to this place, he didn’t know any sane person that would. But after a fire fight above Baltimore, this was where his perp had fled. Now he just needed to get the asshole in cuffs and into custody before someone came for the bounty on his head.

It took a minute for his ship’s computer to talk to the archaic station computer and recognise his clearance as a Special Agent. As the airlock released, Will screwed up his nose at the stale

air.

This station had been dead for years. Intended to process lunar ore, it had been almost sixty years old when an industrial accident blew a hole in the side of the damn thing. Before the autoseal went up half the workers were dead, many others left too injured to ever work again. The company had been closed down, fined to kingdom come. The head honcho decided to take his lumps by throwing himself from the gantry outside his office. As the station had been condemned, no one found his body for weeks, until they came looking.

As if that hadn't been bad enough, ten years later when his son decided to come and look over the place, to see what could be salvaged or even if it could be brought back online, he went missing. Maybe he left the station? Maybe his dead body was here rotting away?

Maybe Will just didn't want to find out.

And this was not the best time to be doing this.

Will wasn't superstitious, but it was a well known fact that during the full moon the station was lit up like a giant light bulb. When it had been a processing plant, the workers had had parties every full moon, mostly because it was hard to find a corner of the station with any darkness.

And very shortly Earth was about to have its first full moon on Halloween in decades. Considering that this had previously happened in such auspicious years as 1944, the hell year that was 2020, 2058 when half of the coastal regions were lost to the sea, and 2077 when the station blew up, it might serve as a warning. Now, in 2096, Will might not be superstitious but he really didn't want to be on the station when the Halloween full moon rose.

But here he was. As was his quarry and, according to his ship's sensors, the bounty hunter that Will had been trying to out pace.

Will had had dealings with this bounty hunter before. Duncan Vizla, they called him the Black Kaiser, and he was ruthless. If Vizla got to Hobbs first then that was it. He'd take him back to whoever had paid the most, in as few a pieces as possible that still allowed the man to function, and then Will would never be able to locate Hobbs' daughter before it was too late.

The last time Will went toe to toe with Vizla, the alpha got there first and the quarry became nothing more than a head in a jar, kept alive long enough to extract all the desired information. And whilst Will was not adverse to seeing Garrett Hobbs become nothing more than a head in a jar, he lacked the equipment to extract the information about Abigail Hobbs' whereabouts if that happened.

He needed to take Hobbs alive.

Will walked to the nearest wall console and patched in his cyberport, tethering the computer to his mind to get what information he could. It was a mess. If it had physical form it would have been like walking through a wasteland painted by Salvador Dali. All ruins, ash and melting bulkhead.

Except-

Will's mind found Vizla's ship, docked the other side of the station. And then Vizla, halfway to Will's own location, tripping long dead sensors that Will's mind had briefly revived.

There was another person, closer to Will. Moving slowly. Hobbs.

And then.

There was a blip and another person. In the station office. An accomplice? Or maybe it was Abigail Hobbs and her father had brought her with him when he'd kidnapped her. Maybe she wasn't buried alive somewhere, as suspected.

Will tried to focus on those sensors, bringing on visuals, like ancient television sets. A crackling view, whiting out every few seconds, it took a lot of concentration for Will to stabilise it enough to make out the figure standing looking out the office window. Facing out to where the full moon was just starting to come into view.

Was it a young girl? Will tried to focus on the shape, no real edges or details. He switched to another angle, another sensor.

"What the fuck?" Will muttered. Yeah, an accomplice, he was sure even as his heartbeat started to pick up.

It was a man. Grey, deathly. And then, as though he knew he was being watched, he turned slowly to look at Will.

Will's breathing picked up, his palms grew sweaty and his blood ran cold. With every slow movement a little more of the man was revealed. And soon, what Will had believed he couldn't possibly have seen, was in fact the case. There was no face. Eye sockets hollow, mouth a gaping maw. Impossibly, the jaw slackened all the more and-

With a scream of pain Will pulled his port from the console and staggered back. The high pitch white noise that had been the skull's scream, echoed around his mind. He couldn't focus, his head swimming and pounding. He felt the drip of blood down his top lip and rubbed a hand there to find his nose was bleeding.

Will started to stagger back towards his ship, reaching out to the airlock that seemed to be growing ever further away.

Everything went black, and Will heard the thud as he hit the deck.

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Will coughed himself awake and within moments recalled it all.

The station, the faceless figure, the blackness.

Will tried to struggle up, panic gripping him in the darkness.

“Stop,” Came a low growl, and then there was a spark of light in the dark and the scent of tobacco.

“Don’t you know those things will kill you?” Will grumbled as he managed to sit himself against the wall. They were in a small space, lit only by the red glow of emergency lighting and the end of Vizla’s cigarette.

Will’s head was thumping as he tried to focus on the man’s face.

“Didn’t have that last time I saw you,” Will grumbled and pointed at Vizla’s eyepatch.

The alpha grunted but otherwise didn’t respond. The few times they’d met face to face, Will hadn’t got much out of him. He was the strong silent type.

“What the fuck is happening here?” Will asked, squinting as he tried to look around the room.

“Storage unit,” Vizla explained. “My sensors picked up your docking. Then I found you passed out-”

He stopped as Will got to his feet and staggered towards the door.

“I wouldn’t,” Vizla warned, taking another drag on his cigarette.

“Why?”

“Because the owner's son won’t like that.”

There was a moment of silence between them before Will leaned back against the wall and looked down at the alpha.

“He’s dead.”

“He is, which is making him even more upset.”

Will stared blankly at Duncan and then shook his head.

“Enough of this shit,” Will growled. Flashes of the dead face came back to his mind as if to prove a point, but he pushed them aside. This shit could not be real.

“Wait.” Duncan was on his feet immediately, grabbing hold of Will’s arm.

Will drew in a breath, he forgot how preternaturally fast alpha’s could be. Surely part of the reason Vizla was so good at his job.

“I’m not going to face off with you on this one, Vizla.” Will snapped. “I need Hobbs alive, he’s the only one who knows where his daughter is. You kill him then you’re killing her too.”

Vizla’s cold stare was just as effective at sending a shiver up Will’s spine even with the eyepatch.

“I don’t care about the bounty,” Vizla replied coldly. “No money is worth being in this place. I’m going back to my ship and I’m leaving. I suggest you do the same.”

There was a slight awkwardness to the man’s words, he was always awkward in conversation in Will’s experience. It might have been endearing had they met under different circumstances.

Will huffed and pulled open the door, heading back out into the dark corridor. The moon was on the other side of the station and with only the dim emergency lighting that had been triggered by their docking, the place was spooky as fuck.

“It’s just a station,” Will said, trying to convince himself as much as anything.

The blood curdling scream came from deep within the station and bounced off the metal walls.

Will froze, as did all the blood in his veins, or so it felt.

“Hobbs,” Vizla noted.

“Fuck.” Whatever was happening, he couldn’t let Hobbs die.

Will took in a deep breath, unlatched his holster and then ran towards the sound. As he drew to the end of the corridor and into the wide open central promenade, he pulled his weapon and surveyed the room.

“There,” Vizla’s voice behind him startled Will for just a moment, and then he followed where the alpha was pointing. Hobbs stood on a gantry three stories up, the one that would be outside the station office if Will figured it correctly.

Will levelled his weapon. “Hobbs, this is Special Agent Will Graham. I’ve come to take you in, come down quietly and surrender yourself into my custody.”

A hysterical bark of laughter echoed around the open space.

He was too far for Will to make out much in the dim light, other than the fact the man was pacing, looking down at them, pacing again.

“Hobbs, surrender or-”

Will’s words dried up in his throat. The movements happened so quickly. Hobbs had stopped pacing and then seemed to be trying to look for an escape, acting as though something was coming for him but Will couldn’t see any other figure up there. Whatever Hobbs was seeing he was screaming again, and then he ran and-

Will watched in horror as Hobbs went over the railings. He plummeted with such force that had someone been up there with him, Will would have believed he’d been pushed.

“Fuck!” Will spat and ran towards the broken body on the floor, Vizla on his heels.

Hobbs' body was almost entirely broken, every bone snapped. And when he coughed up blood and screamed, Will was surprised as he was pretty sure there was no way the man could have survived.

Hobbs looked frantically around, as far as he could move, and then his eyes locked with Will's.

"He's going to kill me," Hobbs said, barely audible through the blood he was choking up. He looked up and the fear in the man's eyes was terrifying. Will looked up to see what Hobbs saw, but there was nothing there.

*

Will grunted as he dropped his end of the man into his ship's one stasis pod.

Even with Vizla's help, it was hard to carry a man who was only being held together by his skin.

"Thanks," Will begrudgingly said, grateful even if unsure why the alpha was helping him.

Will started to prep the pod, hooking Hobbs up and finding that slight trace of life still within him. Enough to freeze him in cryo and get him back to the Agency, where they could stabilise him enough to get the information.

Vizla looked around, checking out Will's ship before he took a seat in the never used co-pilot chair, watching as Will worked.

"What do you know about this place?" Vizla asked, eyeing Will and lighting another cigarette.

"The usual stories." Will dismissed.

Vizla nodded, "Yes, me too. But what if they're not just stories?"

Will blinked and then rolled his eyes. "Are you suggesting that this place is haunted by the ghost of the ore merchant who owned this place?"

The alpha let out a sigh and shook his head, "No, by his son. I've heard stories about this place. That once here you remain trapped here until the next Halloween Full Moon, even if you're dead."

"Lucky for us the full moon is due shortly then, huh?" Will dismissed and continued to plug Hobbs into the system.

The pod closed with a vacuum lock and slid back into place inside the wall of the ship.

Will moved over to the pilot's seat and started to set the course.

"You should probably get back to your own ship." Will said stiffly, wanting to get as far from this place as possible. He could feel Vizla looking at him.

“You’re not even going to believe your own eyes?”

“I didn’t see anything.” Will grumbled, not looking up from the console. The route was all set, autopilot ready to go. It would kick in as soon as the docking clamps were released and calculate the optimum course home. “You’d better go, I’m going to start the undocking process now.”

Vizla stood, lingering awkwardly for a moment before Will said, “Thanks. For the help, and for letting me have Hobbs.”

Vizla gave a curt nod. “I do a lot of bad things for good money, but in this cursed place? I’m not going to risk the life of a little girl.”

Will smiled and nodded, “Thanks.” He said again and held out his hand. They shook, Vizla’s palms rough, Will could feel the magnetic energy that alphas tended to give off. If he wasn’t careful he’d turn omega for an alpha like this one day.

Will scoffed internally at the idea and released Vizla’s hand.

As the bounty hunter walked towards the docking port, Will pressed the button to start the process.

And nothing happened.

He pressed it again and patched himself directly to the console.

“It’s dead. It’s just… there’s nothing. The ship works, the station works, but it’s not letting me go.” Will explained, as much to himself as Vizla.

The alpha stood at the port and turned back to Will.

“The moon isn’t quite full yet.”

*

All scans of the station showed no reason for the docking lock. When Will ported directly into the ship it couldn’t find the problem either. Actually, it insisted there was no problem and that unlocking the docking clamps could be done.

And yet, the locks were not releasing.

“We should check your ship,” Will told Vizla, who still hung around with a look of amusement at how Will was tirelessly attempting to free his ship. “The computer says yours should unlock.”

“It says the same about yours,” Vizla pointed out, but really Will didn’t want to hear it. What the computer was telling him, what was happening, it was all impossible.

Vizla looked out the viewscreen, “The moon will be full for us soon, time is getting short. We should stay here and launch when the station allows us to finally leave.”

Will shook his head, “This is insane. None of this is real. An old omega’s tale and some shitty wiring.”

"Fine,” The alpha allowed and flourished the exit with his hand. “We shall check my ship. And no doubt become stranded here.” There was more amusement than anger as though the man was too laid back to care either way.

*

Despite the continued red glow of the emergency lights, the station seemed somehow darker in the extremities as they edged closer to the brighter centre. They needed to cross back through the main promenade and the large windows there, and by the time they did they were almost blinded.

The contrast between the dimly lit docking corridors and the wide open space filled with bright light was startling. They moved slowly, unable to see where they were stepping.

The spine tingling scream and following thud froze them both to the spot.

It was eerily similar to Hobbs’ fall, and yet, they were the only three people on the station. Themselves there and Hobbs in the stasis pod. After a sharp look at one another, they both pulled out weapons and continued.

And yes there, where Hobbs had fallen not so long before, was another figure.

“What the fuck,” Will muttered, moving quickly forward. The body was sprawled against the decking, much more broken than Hobbs had been. From the angle of their neck, Will had no doubt that this person was dead.

Vizla nudged the figure with his foot before looking back to Will with a raised brow. Will sighed and holstered his weapon, satisfied that Vizla was wordlessly covering him before he leaned down and rolled the body to see exactly who this was.

Will vaguely recognised the fact as that of the owner’s son who had gone missing so many years before. And he was about to say so to Duncan when the face changed, morphing into the one Will had seen in the office. Then the whole body changed.

As they watched in horror, it crumbled, aging rapidly and deteriorating to nothing but a husk until that disintegrated into dust.

Will’s heart was pounding in his chest when he looked, wide-eyed, back at Vizla. But the alpha clearly had no answers either.

And then there was another scream.

By the time Will looked up the person was already jumping from the railing above.

“Fuck!” Will cried out, moving backwards so fast that he ended up on his ass just as the body hit the floor with the wet impact of flesh meeting solid metal. “What the fuck!” Will shouted.

The body was in an identical position. It was the same. Everything was the same and Will felt like he was losing his mind.

With a grunt of suspicion, Vizla nudged this body too, and then used his foot to roll the body and yes. Sure enough, it was the owner's son again.

"Okay, so maybe this place is haunted." Will conceded, a chill running over his whole body.

Will watched the body dissolve once again as Vizla came over and offered him his hand. Will took it, the scream echoing around them once more as he stood. The body hitting the decking again as they both watched with equal horror and confusion as they jumped back.

They collided and ended up holding each other to stop the other falling, as they panted, breathless in their shock.

"I think I'm just going to… head back to my ship." Will said, still trying to take it all in and understand even a modicum of it. If this place really was haunted, then perhaps Vizla was right that his ship would be released once the full moon reached its zenith.

Vizla nodded and released his hold on Will, something that made the beta feel instantly and strangely bereft. Will clenched his jaw and ignored the feeling as they both started back out of the promenade as the scream came from behind them again.

They reached the corridor, splitting one way would take Will back to his ship, Vizla to his own. And Will was about to wish the man good luck, after all it seemed like they might both need it, when the alpha held up a hand for silence.

After a few moments of silence, Will had to ask, "What?"

"The screaming has stopped." Vizla pointed out. And he was right. As faded as it might be from here, they would still be able to hear the scream if not the thud.

Will shook his head, unsure what to say.

And then there was another scream. Not the same as before, this was like a banshee growing closer and closer to them, as through the windows behind them the moon rose, blinding them.

Will didn't resist when he felt Vizla grab him and pull him into the corridor back to his ship. Instantly Will could see again. And he could certainly see the strange shape in the light that was growing closer and into better focus. It was coming directly at them, screaming with a face like death and it's ragged clothes billowing behind it.

Will looked around and saw just along the corridor, a door that was slightly ajar. If that thing was heading in the same direction as them, then they were never going to outrun it, and he didn't want to consider what would happen if it caught up to them.

He grabbed Vizla and pulled him to the door. It didn't budge even when Will put his shoulder to it. When Vizla did the same it gave enough to swing part way, allowing them to squeeze in and shut it behind them.

This room, as all the others, was dimly lit by the red emergency lighting, but they could make out enough to see that the doors mechanisms were completely broken, rotted with lack of maintenance and age. The same was true of much of the bathroom they'd found themselves in, doors hanging off of stalls and at least one toilet had become disconnected from the plumbing.

They were both breathing hard, resting against the door as they took in the room, listening intently. The screaming continued but it passed them, carrying on further along the corridor. And as it did an ice cold chill filled their room, for a moment their breaths froze in the air before warmth began to seep back in.

"I need to get back to my ship." Will growled, hating the situation, all the more so for how little he understood of what was going on. Something he always detested.

"We should wait a few minutes, make sure it has gone." Vizla muttered, standing closer behind Will than he'd realised. Though quiet, his voice was commanding and Will could imagine that many an omega would spread their legs for such a man. Maybe a few betas too.

He shook the thought from his mind, about to protest but instead watched as Vizla moved to the nearest sink and tried the tap. No water came out.

"Well, if it is a person, how have they been surviving." It wasn't a question, more a statement from the alpha.

Will shook his head, "The station is in emergency mode, all non essential areas closed down. It was built to not need replenishments for fifty years, so somewhere in the core there will be working facilities. Probably the crew quarters for designated skeleton crew. When not in use it just hibernates. Peaceful and quiet."

Even as he said it, Will found himself thinking how nice it might be to live somewhere like this. Cut off and quiet. Away from people.

Vizla huffed a chuckle, "You look very taken with the idea."

Will shook his head and frowned.

"I've heard many stories about you Agent Graham. How you can read minds. Must get noisy in there." Vizla tapped his own temple as he spoke.

Will shook his head again. "I can't read minds, I just have… an excessive amount of empathy and imagination."

"Makes you good at your job." Vizla replied, amused.

"How are you not freaking out right now?" Will asked, how could the alpha be making jokes?

Vizla shrugged, "What else can I do." He moved back to the door and listened. "Clear." He replied before letting himself out and clearly expecting Will to follow. Which he did.

“Where did it go?” Will asked.

They both walked slowly, weapons drawn, back towards Will’s ship.

“I think you know.” The alpha replied, an answer also to why he was tagging a long and not going to his own ship. “The moon is rising.”

“Fuck,” Will muttered and picked up the pace. The light from the rising moon was spreading, creeping towards them down the corridor as though it would eventually fill every inch of the station.

And then the audible sound of clamps releasing stopped them in their tracks.

“No!” Will shouted and picked up the pace, he ran fast, Vizla on his heels. But it was too late. He reached the airlock just as it sealed. His ship, doing just as he had ordered it to, had unclamped and started the course to deliver Hobbs back to The Agency on Earth.

Will came to halt at the airlock, watching his ship grow ever distance, the light of the moon filling every space around it until his ship was just a dark patch in the brightness. Such intense brightness that Will had to turn away.

He turned into the solid form of Duncan Vizla, bouncing back and nearly falling until the alpha steadied him.

“We should check your ship.” Will said, trying to remain calm, hopeful. Maybe they could use it to leave this cursed place.

Vizla shook his head, “The moon will pass over soon, and when it does our chance will be lost again.”

“If you believe in ghost stories,” Will scoffed.

Vizla raised his brow, rightly so after all they had just witnessed. “I believe my own eyes.”

They walked there anyway, shielding their eyes to the bright moon, and not saying anything when the light started to fade before they got to the other end of the station, Will felt a sense of dread settle over him.

And yet it wasn’t a surprise when the ship wouldn’t launch, when the computer told Will the same as before - there was nothing wrong. Nothing to stop them leaving. And yet they couldn’t go anywhere.

They were trapped.

“What do we do now?” Will asked, looking out the viewscreen as the moon descended.

Vizla let out a comforting, soft growl and placed a hand on his shoulder. “We wait.”

*

Abigail Hobbs looked up at the bright full moon. The silence she had known for weeks was broken by vehicles above her.

She sobbed as she saw a face smile down at her and lift the cover from the hole. The man reached down for her and his warm smile made her reach up. Her relief at it not being her captor, her father, was overwhelming and she began to cry.

“It’s ok Abigail. My name’s Jack Crawford, I’m here to help you.”

“How did you find me?” She sobbed, relief she was sure she would never feel washed over her.

The Agent visibly shuddered, his expression bleak. She knew then that her father was dead, but felt sure deep inside, that there was much more to it than that.

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